

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3, and 5 through 9 remain in this application. Claims 2 and 4 have been cancelled. No claims have been withdrawn. Claim 10 has been added.

The Examiner's rejections will be considered in the order of their occurrence in the Office Action.

**Paragraph 1 of the Office Action**

Claims 2 and 9 have been objected to for the informalities noted in the Office Action.

Claim 2 has been cancelled, and claim 9 has been amended in a manner believed to clarify any informalities in the language. Specifically, in claim 9, line 18 "extension portion" has been changed to -gripping portion--.

Withdrawal of the objection to claim 9 is therefore respectfully requested.

**Paragraph 2 of the Office Action**

Claims 1, 6, 7 and 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Salvy.

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Nishiyama.

Claims 1 through 4 and 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Tubman.

Claim 1, particularly as amended, requires "wherein said handle member includes a gripping portion for being gripped by the hand of the user and an extension portion for selectively increasing and decreasing an

effective length of said handle member, said extension portion extending into the channel in said head member such that said head member is selectively positionable along a length of said extension member to selectively change a distance between said gripping portion and said head member” and “a locking member coupled to said head member *adjacent to the opening of said channel*, said locking member being configured to selectively *decrease a diameter of said channel at said opening* to press against and frictionally engage an exterior of said handle member to resist movement of the extension portion relative to said head member, thereby fixing the effective length of said handle member”.

It is submitted that the Salvy, Nishiyama and Tubman patents would not lead one of ordinary skill in the art to the applicant’s claimed invention as defined in claim 1, especially with the requirements set forth above, and therefore it is submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the prior art. Further, claims 2, 6 and 8, which depend from claim 1, claims 3 and 4, which depends from claim 2, claim 5, which depends from claim 4 and claim 7, which depends from claim 6 also include the requirements discussed above and therefore are also submitted to be in condition for allowance.

Withdrawal of the §102(b) rejection of claims 1 through 8 is therefore respectfully requested.

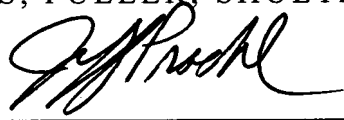
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**CONCLUSION**

In light of the foregoing amendments and remarks, early reconsideration and allowance of this application are most courteously solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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